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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE

(for the period from 15 November 1998 to 15 May 1999)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the last six months in pursuance of the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently resolution 1211 (1998) of 25 November 1998.

II. SITUATION IN THE AREA AND ACTIVITIES OF THE FORCE

2. During the period under review the ceasefire in the Israeli-Syrian sector was maintained without serious incident, and the UNDOF area of operation remained calm. The Force supervised the area of separation by means of fixed positions and patrols to ensure that no military forces were in it. UNDOF also carried out fortnightly inspections of armament and force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. As in the past, both sides denied inspection teams access to some of their positions and imposed some restrictions on the Force's freedom of movement. UNDOF assisted the International Committee of the Red Cross with facilities for mail and the passage of persons through the area of separation. Within the means available, medical treatment was provided to the local population upon request.

3. On 1 April 1999, two Austrian soldiers travelling in a United Nations vehicle were shot at near Damascus from a car. The Syrian authorities are still investigating this incident.

4. Minefields in the area of operation, especially in the area of separation, continue to be a concern. On 6 April 1999, UNDOF, with the close cooperation of both Israeli and Syrian authorities, evacuated a Syrian shepherd, who was injured after stepping on a mine just west of the area of separation on the Israeli side. On 14 April 1999, UNDOF evacuated two children who had been

injured by a mine in the area of separation. When a UNDOF team examined the area, another mine exploded in a nearby field.

5. As of May 1999, UNDOF comprised 1,048 troops, from Austria (428), Canada (186), Japan (45), Poland (354) and Slovakia (35). By the end of May, Slovakian troops will be increased by 58 personnel, replacing the same number of Austrian troops. The Force was assisted in the performance of its tasks by 82 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Major General Cameron Ross continued as Force Commander. A map showing the Force's deployment is attached.

III. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

6. By its resolution 52/236 of 26 June 1998, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $35,400,100 gross for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999. The assessment of the appropriation, which is equivalent to $2,950,008 gross per month, is subject to the Security Council's decision concerning the extension of the mandate.

7. The proposed budget for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 (A/53/779/Add.1) is currently under consideration by the General Assembly. Subject to the Assembly's decision, the cost of maintaining UNDOF, at its currently authorized strength, is estimated at $33,247,500 gross for the period of one year, plus an amount for the peacekeeping support account. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 May 1999, the cost of maintaining the Force will be limited to the amounts indicated above.

8. As at 30 April 1999, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNDOF special account for the period from the inception of the Force to 31 May 1999 amounted to $53.6 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1.6 billion.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 338 (1973)

9. In deciding in its resolution 1211 (1998) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, the Security Council also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973), and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on the development in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and, in particular, the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement Security Council resolution 338 (1973) were dealt with in my report on the situation in the Middle East (A/53/550), submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 52/54 of 9 December 1997.

V. OBSERVATIONS

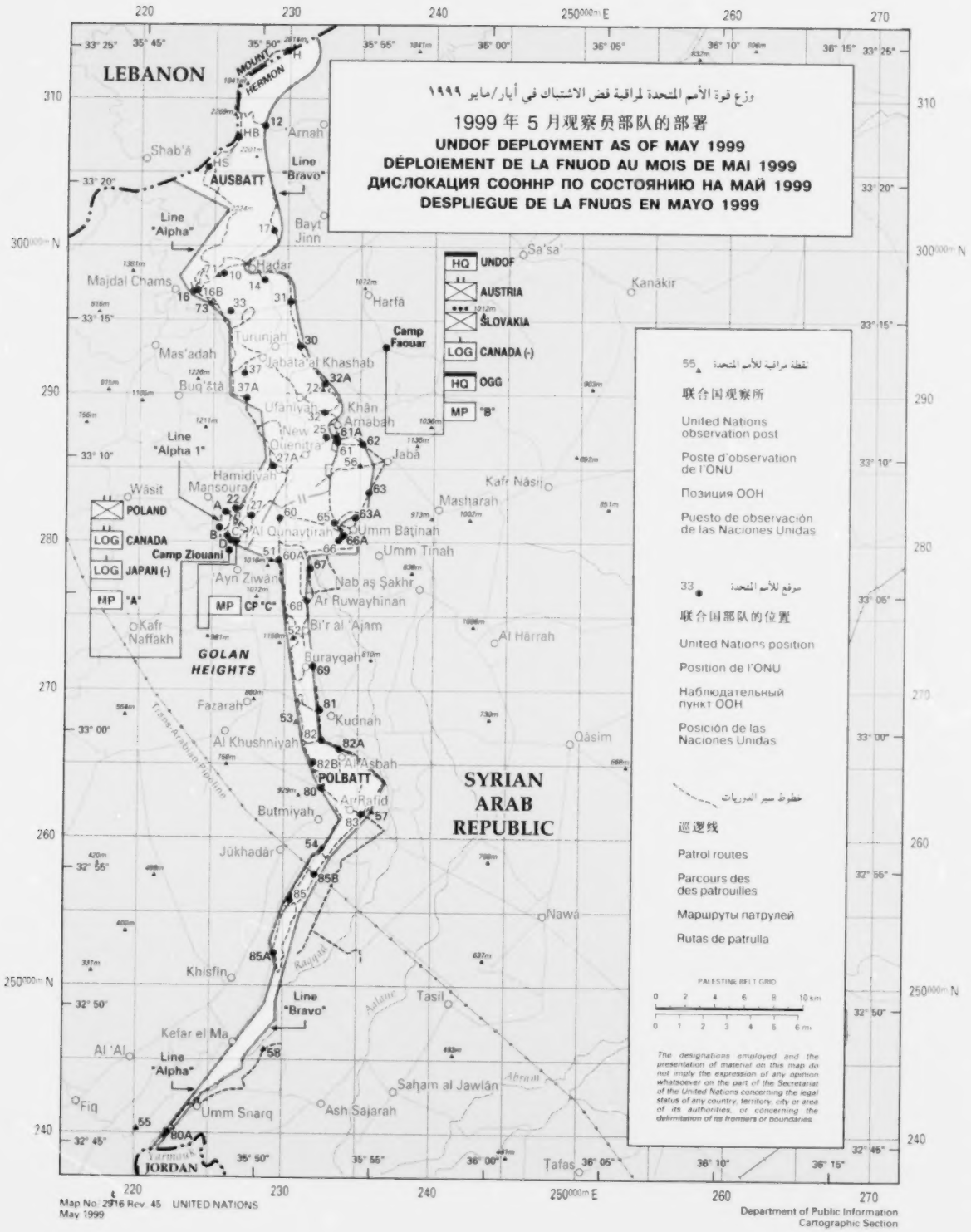
10. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the ceasefire called for by the Security Council and the agreement on disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its function effectively, with the cooperation of the parties. The situation in the Israeli-Syrian sector has remained quiet and there has been no serious incident.

11. Despite the present quiet in the Israeli-Syrian sector, the situation in the Middle East continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects, with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

12. In the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 30 November 1999. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

13. In making this recommendation, I must draw attention to the serious shortfall in the funding of the Force. At present, unpaid assessments amount to some $53.6 million. This sum, far larger than the current annual budget of UNDOF, represents money owed to Member States that contribute the troops who make up the Force. I appeal to all Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears.

14. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Major General Cameron Ross and to the men and women serving with UNDOF. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing troops to UNDOF and to those that provide the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force.


وزع قوة الأمم المتحدة لمراقبة فض الاشتباك في أيار/مايو ١٩٩٩
1999 年 5 月观察员部队的部署
UNDOF DEPLOYMENT AS OF MAY 1999
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA FNUOD AU MOIS DE MAI 1999
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ СООННР ПО СОСТОЯНИЮ НА МАЙ 1999
DESPLIEGUE DE LA FNUOS EN MAYO 1999
LEBANON
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
JORDAN
GOLAN HEIGHTS
HQ UNDOF
AUSTRIA
SLOVAKIA
LOG CANADA (-)
HQ OGG
MP "B"
POLAND
LOG CANADA
Camp Ziouani
LOG JAPAN (-)
MP "A"
MP CP "C"
POLBATT
AUSBATT
Line "Alpha"
Line "Alpha 1"
Line "Bravo"
Camp Faouar
United Nations observation post
Poste d'observation de l'ONU
Позиция ООН
Puesto de observación de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations position
Position de l'ONU
Наблюдательный пункт ООН
Posición de las Naciones Unidas
Patrol routes
Parcours des des patrouilles
Маршруты патрулей
Rutas de patrulla
PALESTINE BELT GRID
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